

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the application. Claims 6 and 7 are withdrawn from consideration in response to an election requirement. Claims 1, 10, 12, and 13 are in independent form. Claim 1 is generic to all species of the invention.

The Applicants wish to express their appreciation to Examiner Mitchell for courtesies extended during the recent telephonic interviews.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. The Office Action bases the rejection upon the assumption that rubber, as specified in claim 4, is not a polymer.

The Applicant respectfully requests the Office to take notice of the accompanying excerpt from the Dictionary of Scientific and Technical Terms, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Copyright 1974. On page 1283 of this publication, rubber is defined as a polymer. It is in this sense that the Applicants have used the terms "rubber" and "polymer" in the subject application. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that "rubber" in Claim 4 can be understood as a species of the more generic term "polymer" in Claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5, 8, 9, and 13-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guth et al. '636.

Claims 10-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guth et al. '636 in view of Tripathy '158.

The Applicants have introduced amendments to the independent claims which distinguish the claimed invention over the prior art. Specifically, Claims 1 and 10 have been amended to include terminology setting forth the first (backed) and second (unbacked) sealing portions as directly engaging the rotating surface. Neither Guth nor Tripathy disclose both first and second sealing portions (i.e., both backed and unbacked sections of the PTFE) directly engaging the rotating surface. Rather, it is the prior art custom that only the unbacked portions of PTFE directly engage the rotating shaft.

Claims 12 and 13 have been amended to introduce terminology which defines the first and second sealing portions of the PTFE seal as forming a generally continuous cylindrical sealing surface which directly engages the rotating shaft. By contrast, prior art designs bend the PTFE seal into a generally funnel shape, with only the unbacked portion of the PTFE directly engaging the rotating member.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the application, as amended, is now presented in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited.

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

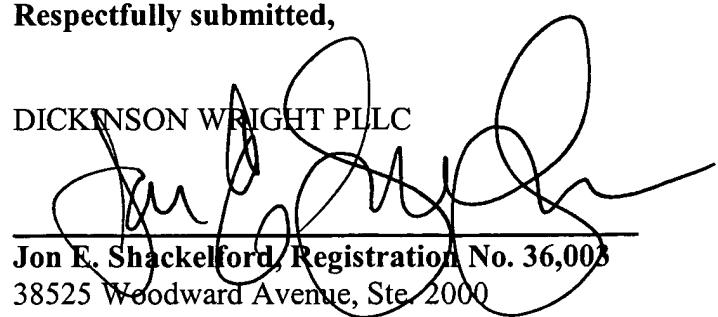
The Patent Office is authorized to charge or refund any fee deficiency or excess to Deposit Account No. 04-1061.

Respectfully submitted,

DICKINSON WRIGHT PLLC

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Date


Jon E. Shackelford, Registration No. 36,003
38525 Woodward Avenue, Ste 2000
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48304-2970
(734) 623-1734